

So what is this thing called, “Worship?”



The worship service is the most important activity of any church. Each Sunday the body of believers gathers together to worship God. But what is worship? How do we know that what we are doing pleases God? Thankfully, the Bible shows us what God is after. This fall, we will explore worship from God's perspective, and shape what we do in worship according to God's purposes.

The Best Resource

We often think of worship as though we are consumers, expecting that the primary purpose of worship is to meet our needs. We fail to remember that God is also a player in our worship; in fact, God is the central figure. Thankfully, God has not left us to figure out what worship is all about on our own, but has clearly expressed His intentions. **The best resource for us is The Ten Commandments**, where God first revealed how He wants his people to relate to Him.

Exodus 20:1-11 (The First Four Commandments)

1 Then **God spoke*** all these words: **2** “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery;

3 You shall have no other gods before me.

4 You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. **5** You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, **6** but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

7 You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

8 Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. **9** Six days you shall labor and do all your work. **10** But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. **11** For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.”

* Note that The Ten Commandments were not first written on tablets that Moses brought down from Mount Sinai, but God actually spoke them out to His people. Worship is intimacy with God, which God deeply desires.



Slavery

This is where we all begin our journey. We are all enslaved to the powers of this world. Sometimes these are external powers of injustice and oppression. Other times they are the internal powers of a corrupt will and sinful intentions. Yet there is good news for all of us. God knows our suffering and has come to deliver us!

Mount Sinai

God begins His work of deliverance by drawing us away from the world so that we can be alone with Him. He will teach us how to relate to him and others in a new and refreshing way. He promises that nothing will ever separate us from His love and protection. He reveals His intentions to bring us to a new, promised land.



Questions *for reflection or group discussion:*

Have you ever felt enslaved?

Are you mindful that God is listening when you pray?

What first step might you take to bring your life into closer intimacy with God?



Your Notes *what God is saying to you:*
